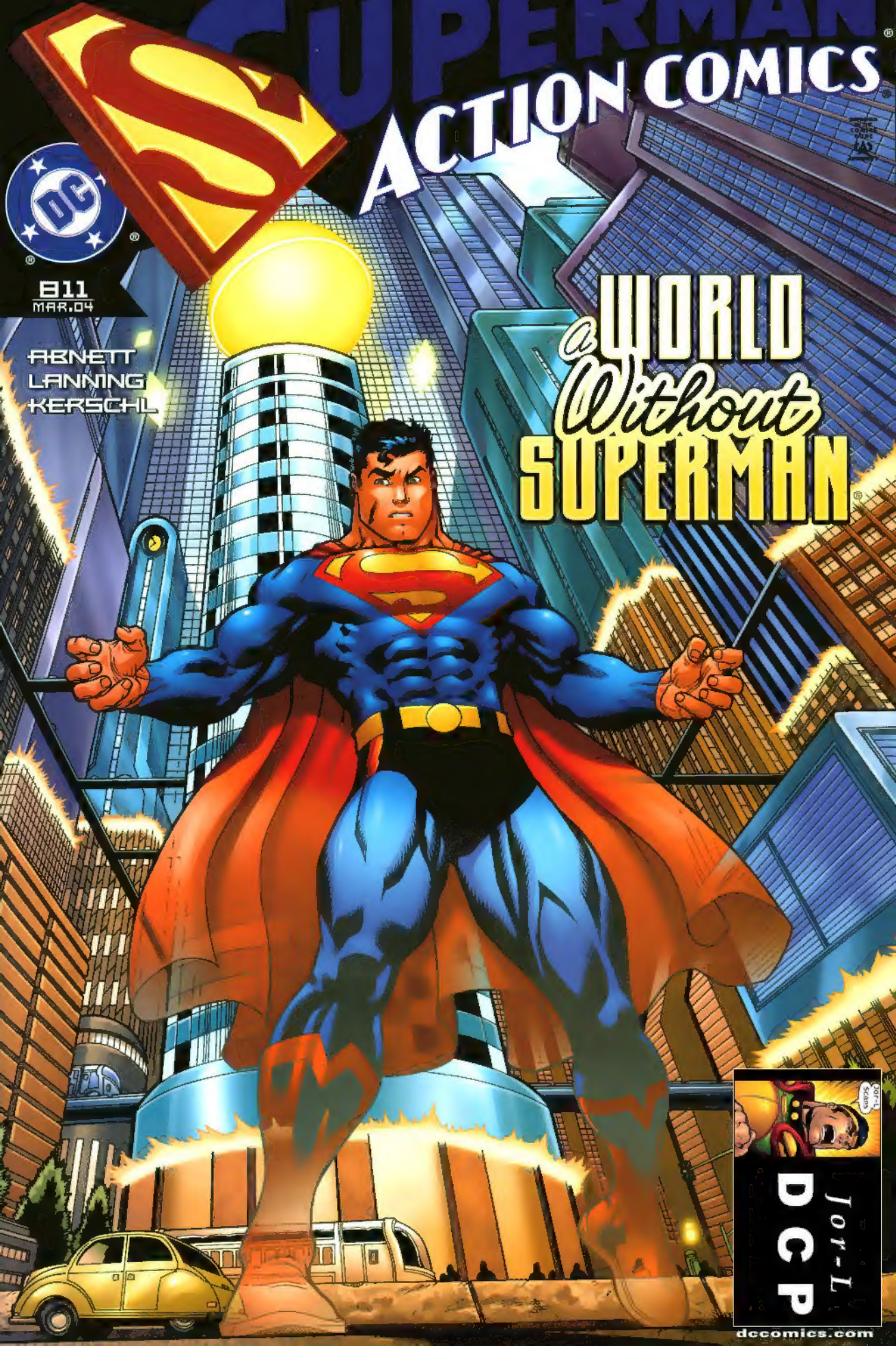
SUPERMAN
ACTION COMICS
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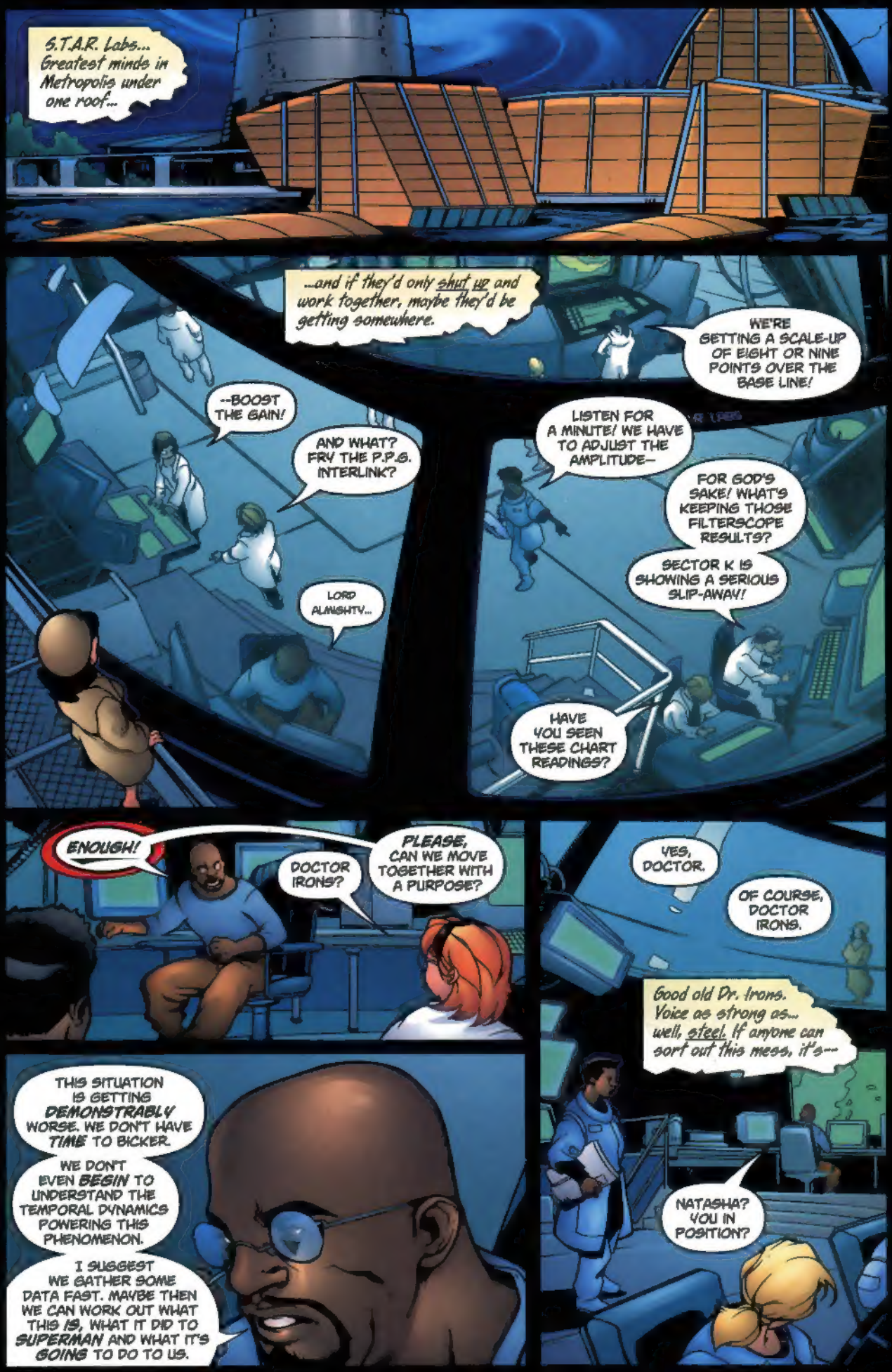
H-HANG ON, SHOEBEAR!
KRNNCH-CH
O-OH! SHOEBEAR!
OH! O-OHH!
DON'T WORRY. I'VE GOT YOU.

STRANGE NEW VISITOR
PART ONE
"I DON'T KNOW WHY I DID IT. I WAS TERRIFIED, I CAN TELL YOU. I GUESS I DID IT BECAUSE IT'S WHAT HE WOULD HAVE DONE..."
...IF HE'D BEEN HERE, I MEAN.
DAILY PLANET
It's been a week since Superman vanished. The Time Storm's been raging above Metropolis ever since.
The Time Storm. That's what we're all calling it. I don't think anybody actually knows what it is.
We just know what it's doing to us. In many cases--like Mr. Amara here--it's bringing out the very best in us all.
The hero.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, MR. AMARA.
OF COURSE, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN AN INSPIRATION--
--RIGHT FROM THAT FIRST DAY HE APPEARED AND SAVED THE SPACE PLANE. DO YOU REMEMBER THAT, MISS LANE?
I remember. I was on that flight.

DAN ABNETT & ANDY LANNING WRITERS • KARL KERSCHL ART
TANYA AND RICHARD HORIE COLORS • ROB LEIGH LETTERS
TOM PALMER JR. ASSOCIATE EDITOR • EDDIE BERGANZA EDITOR
SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER

There was no hope. No chance. Not even the expectation of hope.
And then, with a bumpy touchdown, the impossible.
I'm afraid we've come to expect the impossible since then.
Miraculous rescues and against-the-odds saves have been such a part of daily life in Metropolis they almost seem normal.
Somewhere down the line, we all got complacent about the impossible.

Until last week.
THANK YOU FOR COMING IN, MR. AMARA.
MY PLEASURE, MISS LANE.
--DON'T GIVE ME THAT, OLSEN! I WANT SOMETHING I CAN RUN ABOVE THE FOLD IN THE NEXT EDITION!
BUT CHIEF... KINDA NEAT, DON'T YOU THINK? CITY SKYLINE IN SILHOUETTE, THE STORM DOING A WHOLE AURORA BOREALIS SHTICK--
AND IT DIFFERS FROM THE ONES YOU SHOWED ME YESTERDAY HOW, OLSEN?
THE STORM'S THE THING. I MEAN... TODAY, YESTERDAY, THE DAY BEFORE...
I WANT SOMETHING NEW! I WANT NEWS! I WANT NEW NEWS!
OR--GOD HELP ME--A NEW ANGLE ON THE OLD STUFF AT LEAST.
LOIS? MAKE ME HAPPY.
YOU'RE RIDICULOUSLY HANDSOME FOR A MAN OF YOUR AGE, PERRY.
HOWEVER, NO STORY YET.
DAH!
BUT LOTS OF POSSIBLES. PEOPLE ARE DOING THE MOST AMAZING THINGS IN THE FACE OF THIS CRISIS.
I'M GOING OUT. I'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO YOU BY FIVE THIRTY.
Something's missing, and it's more than just the lead story.
No one takes notice of a missing reporter, supposedly taken down by the "flu".
But I look up in the sky...
...I see only the storm.


S.T.A.R. Labs... Greatest minds in Metropolis under one roof...
...and if they'd only shut up and work together, maybe they'd be getting somewhere.
WE'RE GETTING A SCALE-UP OF EIGHT OR NINE POINTS OVER THE BASE LINE!
--BOOST THE GAIN!
AND WHAT? FRY THE P.P.S. INTERLINK?
LORD ALMIGHTY...
LISTEN FOR A MINUTE! WE HAVE TO ADJUST THE AMPLITUDE—
FOR GOD'S SAKE! WHAT'S KEEPING THOSE FILTERSCOPE RESULTS?
SECTOR K IS SHOWING A SERIOUS SLIP-AWAY!
HAVE YOU SEEN THESE CHART READINGS?
ENOUGH!
DOCTOR IRONS?
PLEASE, CAN WE MOVE TOGETHER WITH A PURPOSE?
YES, DOCTOR.
OF COURSE, DOCTOR IRONS.
Good old Dr. Irons. Voice as strong as... well, steel. If anyone can sort out this mess, it's—
THIS SITUATION IS GETTING DEMONSTRABLY WORSE. WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO BICKER.
WE DON'T EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE TEMPORAL DYNAMICS POWERING THIS PHENOMENON.
I SUGGEST WE GATHER SOME DATA FAST. MAYBE THEN WE CAN WORK OUT WHAT THIS IS, WHAT IT DID TO SUPERMAN AND WHAT IT'S GOING TO DO TO US.
NATASHA? YOU IN POSITION?

ALMOST, UNCLE JOHN. TWO MILES UP. CYCLE UP THE SENSOR PROBE WHILE I GET IT INTO--
Natasha Irons, John Henry's niece. After he suffered injuries, she took up the hammer and became the new Steel.
WHH..
VA'SSHH
NATASHA!
NATASHA! RESPOND! TALK TO ME, NAT!
NAT!
RELAX, JOHN. I GOT HER. SHE'S OKAY.
SUPERBOY?!
GOD. SHE'S OKAY.
She's okay. It's okay. Nobody died. This time.

But they do die. Even the ones you think are totally out of death's reach. Doomsday proved that.
And then what's left? What do you do? How do you cope?
Do your best, maybe? What if your best isn't enough?
What if only his best will do it?
Imitations like Eradicator and the Cyborg, even replacements like Steel and Superboy don't come close.
Tell me how you stop the end of the world then?

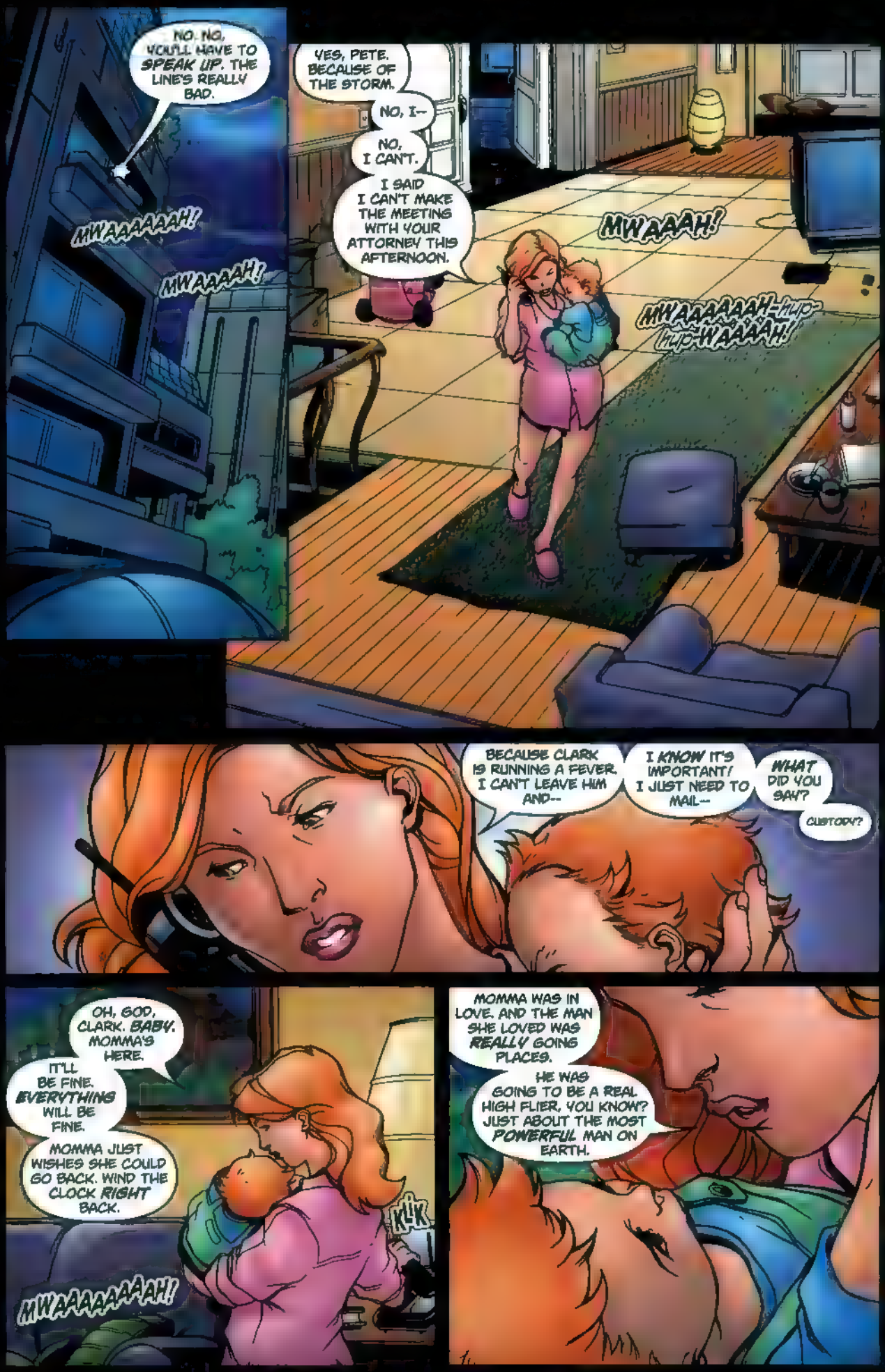
Suicide Slum. At noon, the storm conditions caused a power-out through five blocks.
SALE !! discount jewelry
Lights went out. Everything went out. Even the backup to the security systems on the jewelers' arcade.
SALE !! discount jewelry
It wasn't even a case of smash and grab. With the hard-light, hololithic window-screens out, it was just grab.
The perps made a speedy exit. One of them was waving a nine. A passerby with a working cell called it in.
A high-speed pursuit followed. In the confusion of the power out, the perps were set to get away.

But the power failure had fritzed out all the traffic management systems too. One block over, the perps' ride was sideswiped by cross traffic.
One of the perps made a break, leaving his partner in need of traction. He was still waving that nine.
And then...
UNNFFF!
WHAMMM

...IS THAT A FAIR DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS?
PRETTY MUCH, MISS LANE.
AND THE TWO BY FOUR PLANK YOU HAPPENED TO BE CARRYING, BIBBO?
I'D JUST GOT IT FROM A HARDWARE STORE. WITH THE POWER OUT, I HAD TO PROP THE DARN SLIDING DOOR SOMEHOW.
ANYTHING ELSE FOR THE RECORD? I MEAN, THE GUY HAD A GUN.
I WAS JUST... I DUNNO...STANDING IN FOR THE BIG BLUE. 'TIL HE COMES BACK.
I MEAN, WE ALL GOTTA HELP OUT, RIGHT?
YOU BELIEVE SUPERMAN WILL COME BACK, THEN?
HE ALWAYS COMES BACK. THAT'S HIS THING. NO MATTER WHAT--
--HE ALWAYS COMES BACK.

Always.
No matter what.
Even death couldn't stop him.

But how many times can even he pull a trick like that?
Are we expecting the impossible again?
STORM
The City of Tomorrow's in turmoil. Gridlock. Power-outs. Technology failing.
What if the City of Tomorrow has no tomorrow anymore? What if Superman isn't coming back this time?
What if my husband isn't coming back?
THE END OF THE WORLD IS NIGH


NO. NO, YOU'LL HAVE TO SPEAK UP. THE LINE'S REALLY BAD.
MWAAAAAAH!
MWAAAAH!
YES, PETE. BECAUSE OF THE STORM.
NO, I--
NO, I CAN'T.
I SAID I CAN'T MAKE THE MEETING WITH YOUR ATTORNEY THIS AFTERNOON.
MWAAAH!
MWAAAAAAH-HUP-HUP-WAAAAH!
BECAUSE CLARK IS RUNNING A FEVER. I CAN'T LEAVE HIM AND--
I KNOW IT'S IMPORTANT! I JUST NEED TO MAIL--
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
CUSTODY?
OH, GOD, CLARK. BABY. MOMMA'S HERE.
IT'LL BE FINE. EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.
MOMMA JUST WISHES SHE COULD GO BACK. WIND THE CLOCK RIGHT BACK.
KLIK
MWAAAAAAAH!
MOMMA WAS IN LOVE. AND THE MAN SHE LOVED WAS REALLY GOING PLACES.
HE WAS GOING TO BE A REAL HIGH FLIER, YOU KNOW? JUST ABOUT THE MOST POWERFUL MAN ON EARTH.

THERE WASN'T ANYTHING HE WASN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO.
AND HE WAS GOING TO TAKE ME, LANA LANG, WITH HIM.

WE...WE NEED YOUR HELP. THAT'S WHY WE'VE COME TO THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE.
SUPERMAN'S... MISSING. THE TIME STORM IS GETTING WORSE.
WE THINK IT MIGHT BE CONNECTED SOMEHOW TO THE B13 TECH IN METROPOLIS.
IF THAT'S TRUE, KRYPTONIAN TECH MIGHT BE IMMUNE TO IT. YOU MIGHT BE IMMUNE, ERADICATOR.
I MIGHT. I'VE BEEN MONITORING THE STORM.
YOU'LL HELP?
I'VE BEEN DORMANT TOO LONG.
IF I HAVE A PLACE AT ALL, MAYBE IT'S IN A WORLD WITHOUT A SUPERMAN.
WHERE DO WE START?
THE PHANTOM ZONE PROJECTOR SHOULD HELP US CONTAIN THE ANOMALY THE TIME STORM IS CREATING--
--AND IF THE B13 TECH IS THE KEY, THEN WE START WITH THE MOMENT IT FIRST APPEARED...

Y2K. THE MILLENNIUM. BRAINIAC 13, POURING HIS ESSENCE BACKWARDS THROUGH TIME TO REMAKE METROPOLIS IN HIS IMAGE.
AND THEN, DEFEATED, LEAVING BEHIND HIS LEGACY. A CITY BUILT OF THE FUTURE, UNLIKE ANY ON EARTH. A WONDERLAND. A TECHNOLOGICAL PARADISE.
A TIME BOMB.

--SAVED US FROM BRAINIAC 13, DIDN'T HE? HAPPY NEW YEAR THAT WAS, NOT--
--RESCUED MY SISTER FROM A RUNAWAY EXPRESS TRAIN--
--YEAH, I SAVED HIM FROM THE FIRE. I MEAN, THERE'S NO SUPES TO COUNT ON NOW, RIGHT?
--ME WANNA SEE SOOPIMAN FLY. ME WANNA SEE--
--WHAT CAN I TELL YA, MISS LANE? LIFE AIN'T GETTING ANY EASIER WITHOUT HIM--
WASSAT YE SAY? HEY! WHAT DE HELL IS WRONG WID DE SKY?
HE'S NOT DEAD AGAIN, IS HE?
ME? I'D LIKE HIM BACK. MAYBE SAVE THE WORLD. BUSINESS IS REALLY DOWN.
YOU DRIVE 'ROUND THIS CITY ALL DAY, LADY, HE WAS LIKE PART OF THE SCENERY.

It's not that there's no story, Perry. The problem is there are too many.
HELP WANTED
APPLY WITHIN
A hundred thousand plus stories of private heroism and personal courage. People making do. People getting by. People not expecting the impossible anymore.
Metropolis is looking after itself as best it can. We'd better hope that's enough.
STEP
We've got used to there only ever being one story.
Every morning. Every late edition. Every front page.
One story.
Superman.

HEY! THAT AIN'T RIGHT!
WHAT?
GOOD GOD...
RUN FOR IT!
OOOW!

OH NO, NO, NO—
AAAHHH!
NOT HAPPENING! NOT HAPPENING!
DON'T WORRY. I'VE GOT YOU.
OH MY GOD.

IMPOSSIBLE...
next:
MAJESTIC